

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF
POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART

Fourth Series

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS.

No. 365.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 24, 1870.

PRICE 1d.

LADY LESINGHAM'S DIAMONDS.

I WAS the eldest of five girls early left fatherless and unprovided for, except by a small annuity; and when Uncle Charles, the rich and, as we thought, predestinated bachelor of our family, thought proper to marry, it became advisable for me to do something, by way of lessening the strain upon household resources.

The somethings which young ladies could do, or get to do, were nearly as few and far between in my youth as they are now; and after advertising myself and my accomplishments in the most approved manner, and studying the *Times* for some months, I felt rather on my promotion one morning when the postman brought me a note from the Dowager-countess of Lesingham, requesting to see me immediately, at a certain house in Bryanston Square. The note was in reference to one of the many advertisements I had answered. It was that of a lady who wanted a companion; and within an hour after the receipt of it, I had walked from our little house on the confines of Hammersmith, and was knocking at one of the gloomy mansions in that ancient haunt of rank and fashion. There was no sign of life about the house, and it gave back a hollow sepulchral echo to my knock that frightened me. I was not twenty, and had been little from home at the time, and the solemnity of the wigged and powdered footman who opened the door completed my dismay. Having heard my business, he left me to sit in the hall for a few minutes, then returned, and marshalled me to the library. A heavy room it was, with costly but old-fashioned furniture; and there, behind a screen and before a bright fire (for it was the middle of October, when all the rest of the titled world were out of town), sat an elderly lady without a gray hair, though I was conscious she wore a wig. Her figure was still fine, though cast in a large mould, and did justice to the rich morning-dress she wore. Her features were of that prominent order which is said to indicate Norman descent. She had a dark but clear complexion, eyes at once deep and keen, and such a terrible composure of look and

manner as made me wish myself safe at home again.

At the opposite side of the fire, and with open books in their hands, but evidently perusing me, sat two discontented-looking girls, both extremely like the old lady, but by no means so handsome as she must have been in her youth, and attired in morning-dresses that had seen service.

'Good-morning, Miss Fenton,' said the dowager with haughty condescension. 'Please to take a seat; I am glad to see you.' And she proceeded with a series of questions regarding my abilities, tastes, and inclinations, which I trust were answered to her satisfaction; for my confusion of mind was great, and her keen eyes were upon me all the time, as if taking stock and measure of all within.

'Well,' said her Ladyship at last, to my great relief, for the thought of being companion to such a dame was becoming too much for me—'it is not for myself, but for my daughter-in-law, Lady Lesingham, that I wish to engage you. Her health has suffered from the loss of friends and relatives; in fact, she is somewhat peculiar and retired in her habits, and requires a companion to remain with her and amuse her. I think you would suit; but she ought to see you, I suppose.—Clementina, my dear, ring the bell.'

One of the discontented-looking girls accordingly rang; the footman re-appeared, and what the dowager said to him I could not catch; but he marshalled me out of the library, up the grand stair, and along a passage which I knew led to the back of the house. At the end of it, he knocked at a door, which was opened by a wizened little woman in shabby clothes, to whom he said something equally inaudible to me. She responded 'Humph!' and without further sign of notice or salutation, admitted me first into a small ante-room, then into a larger apartment, where a lady was sitting listlessly on an easy-chair by the fire, to whom she said: 'Here is Miss Fenton, the young person who is to be your companion.'

The style of address struck me as singularly unlike that which prevailed in the front division

of the grand gloomy house, and so did the surroundings. Old, worn, and faded to the last degree, was all the furniture of the room, from the tattered easy-chair on which the lady sat, to the crazy piano in the corner. The lady's attire was of a piece with all about her—a soiled faded dressing-gown, and the remnant of an old shawl; but the dressing-gown had been of a bright colour and richly embroidered, the shawl had come from India, and the lady had been a pretty woman in her day, with finely moulded features and fair hair. But the day was done. She was thin, and pallid, and withered before the time, as one knew at the first glance; and had a look half-melancholy and half-wild, which would have told a better judgment than mine of a wandering mind.

The dowager had said she was peculiar, and I was inclined to think the same; but for all the melancholy and uncertainty of her look, I felt nothing of the fear and dread that fell on me in the presence of the dame in the library. She gazed at me for a minute or two without speaking, and then said: 'I am glad you are come, and I hope you will be a good girl; but I can't talk to you now—I am not myself to-day. The countess has been here. You won't find me always so bad. My maid Mossrose here'—and she looked at the wizened woman—'can tell you all about it.'

'O yes,' chimed in the damsel so incongruously designated, 'my lady is apt to be a little upset after a visit from her friend the Countess of Tunbridge, talking of old times and acquaintances, you see; but that don't last; she'll be all right to-morrow, and right enough always, I'll warrant, if you can play whist with her and read stories. It's a good place, I can tell you, for any young person. You are coming on Tuesday next, I hope; that is as long as we can do without somebody; and if you don't, another will.' Here the Mossrose stopped, for there was another knock at the door. The footman came to ask if Lady Lesingham thought I would suit, and also to inform me that the dowager was occupied for the present, but she would write to me on the subject of the engagement; with which intimation he conducted me down-stairs and out of the street-door.

I went home more surprised than delighted at my first prospect of a situation. My mother was of the same mind when she heard my tale; but the salary was a good one, and companion to Lady Lesingham sounded well; so when the dowager's note arrived next day, appointing me to the office in her own grand manner, and commanding me to enter upon its duties on the following Tuesday at 1 P.M., the offer was accepted with becoming acknowledgments. In the meantime, we were naturally curious concerning the family history of my titled employers. Cousin Frederick was then in a solicitor's office, and I am sure he exerted himself on the subject; but all that his professional opportunities enabled him to make out was, that Lord Lesingham—the son of the commanding dowager, husband of the peculiar lady, and father of the discontented-looking girls—had sunk his estate and himself in all sorts of debt by his untiring devotion to the turf and the gaming-table; that the family mansion was in consequence possessed by strangers, and a writ of outlawry made his Lordship prefer a continental residence; while his prudent mother, having taken care of her own jointure and dower-house, also took charge of his wife and

daughters, and maintained the honours of the ancient line in Bryanston Square.

With that explanation of the state of things in my mind's eye, I repaired to the scene of my official duties on the day and hour appointed. The dowager had to see me in the library, her chamber of audience. Before I went up-stairs, she praised my punctuality; said I might depend on her consideration, if my conduct was good, though she was much occupied with the duties of society, and the introduction of her grand-daughters to the world. However, she hoped I would bear in mind that Lady Lesingham's maid Mossrose, who had been with her Ladyship for years, and understood her peculiarities, could advise me on any little matter of which I might be doubtful; and also I would please to remember that Lady Lesingham's companion was allowed quarterly holidays, and no visitors on any account.

I suppose the feeling of being awarded six months with hard labour, must be something like what I experienced when Mossrose made fast the door of the ante-room on me and my light luggage, with: 'Well, you have come, and I am glad of it.' That door formed the only communication with the upstairs world. There was another small one in the opposite corner, which opened on a narrow stair leading down to the basement story, and thus giving access to all the domestic departments as well as to the back entrance. The rooms which Lady Lesingham occupied in her mother-in-law's dower-house consisted of four—the ante-room, the sitting-room, her Ladyship's bedroom (where Mossrose also slept on a pallet-bed close by that of her mistress), and a chamber of smaller dimensions for the companion. They were situated on the first floor of a wing, or rather projection, in the rear of the mansion; one-half of the windows looked out upon a narrow lane, into which nothing opened but back-doors, and the other half commanded a very near prospect of leads and dead walls. The style of their furnishings I have already described; and seen by the misty light of a London autumn, I don't think there was a more cheerless dwelling in creation. The maid looked as shabby and wizened as when I first saw her a week before; the lady sat in the very same spot, wrapped in the same old shawl and dressing-gown; but she was calm and collected, bade me good-morning with great civility, and entered into conversation with so much ease and sprightliness, that I felt sure she must have been an agreeable woman in her better days; and further acquaintance confirmed that impression.

Barring, as the Irish say, the queer circumstances under which she lived, her Ladyship was not difficult to keep in tune; her mind was weak and liable to wander, rather than positively deranged; and I was not long her companion before it was clear to me that some heavy burden lay upon it, and was gradually breaking it down. The routine of her days was—a late breakfast in bed; a very small piece of needlework; a drive in a close carriage, which always came for and brought her to the back-door; an amount of reading aloud by me, always novels, and the more foolish they were, her Ladyship liked them the better; a late dinner, and whist till midnight, when Mossrose insisted on her getting to bed. Neither her mother-in-law nor her daughters ever visited her rooms in my time, and she never ventured into the superior parts of the

house; indeed, her wardrobe was so scanty, old, and faded, that Lord Lesingham's spouse would not have been ornamental to any drawing-room, the dressing-gown being varied only by a couple of over-worn silks, and the Indian shawl by a mantle of far by-gone fashion. Yet one remnant of splendour Lady Lesingham retained, which fairly dazzled my girlish eyes, and that was a set of most magnificent diamonds—necklace, brooch, bracelets, and earrings—set in a massive and antiquated style, but of such size and brilliancy as I have never seen before or since.

My astonishment was boundless the first time I saw her seated on the tattered chair, attired in a black velvet evening-dress, which was perfectly threadbare, and wearing on her thin neck and emaciated arms those matchless diamonds. It was in the afternoon, about the fashionable visiting-hour, when the roll of carriages is heard through all the West End streets in the London season; there were not many to be heard then; but Lady Lesingham looked as if she expected somebody, and somebody by no means welcome, for all the splendour she had put on to receive them.

I thought madness must be coming upon her, there was such a strange mingling of fear, and misery, and state in her manner; when I caught the sound of wheels, then a thundering knock at the front-door, to which the whole house resounded, feet approaching our backward wing, and at last the solemn footman, throwing open the sitting-room door, announced the Countess of Tunbridge. The announcement was followed by a small slender woman: her face had a remarkable resemblance to that of a cat, she looked as wizened as Mossrose herself, and old enough to be anybody's grandmother; but she was dressed in the most youthful height of the fashion, and tripped into the room with quite a girlish air. 'My dear,' she cried, running up to Lady Lesingham, and taking her by both hands, 'I am delighted to see you in that dear old black velvet and those beautiful diamonds; doubtless you like to wear them on account of the little romance with which they are connected—tales of the heart never lose their interest.—Have you heard from Lord Lesingham of late, my dear?' I did not catch Lady Lesingham's replies: they were brief, and in a very low tone. But if the Countess of Tunbridge was her old friend, as the maid had told me, she was not a welcome visitor, for the poor lady's look reminded me of nothing but one that had got a serpent coiled about her, and dared not move, for fear of its deadly fangs. It was also plain to me, though I cannot say why, that the countess was talking double; there was something behind her delight at seeing the dear old black velvet and the beautiful diamonds, which the two understood; and there they sat looking at each other, with malice in the one face, fear in the other, and hatred in both, but carrying on a polite conversation about nothing worth repeating, with 'charming' and 'delightful' at every second word. To say that the countess was at her ease on the old worn settee where she enthroned herself, would be falling far short of the subject; she was in a state of triumph, high but hidden, and of a kind that made my young blood cold to see. Her Ladyship did not acknowledge my existence till she rose to go with the remark: 'You have got another companion, my dear: what a pleasure it must be to have such a succession of nice young people in

your calm retreat;' and there was another clasping of Lady Lesingham's both hands, another admiring of the diamonds and the velvet, and, saying she must now see her precious friend the dowager, Lady Tunbridge tripped out in the most coquettish manner.

The moment she was gone, my Lady sprang from her easy-chair, rushed into her bedroom, where I heard her tearing off her dress and jewels; and in less than two minutes she was back again in the old dressing-gown and shawl, looking exactly as I had seen her on the day of my first introduction. Crazy and miserable, is the only description I can give of her appearance: it was sad to see; and in hopes of cheering up her poor Ladyship, I volunteered to go down to the library for the second volume of *Cecilia*, our latest novel. I had found it, and was quitting the library, when a sound of voices made me pause; it was Lady Tunbridge taking leave of the dowager at the drawing-room door, and what a tender leave-taking on both sides was there! The parting of twin sisters could not have been more affectionate: it was over at last, the street-door closed, and I came out; there was nobody in the way; the drawing-room still stood open, and I looked in; the dowager was standing alone in the middle of the room, her face white with rage, and her keen eyes flashing like flame; her hands were clenched, and so were her teeth, and the stately chieftainess of the Lesingham line brought to my mind one of the ancient Furies.

She loved her newly departed visitor as little as did the poor lady up-stairs, but she managed the leave-taking better. That was my first lesson in the hypocrisy of high life; and I had many opportunities of studying the subject as week after week passed away, for every Friday, as regularly as the day came round, the Countess of Tunbridge came too. With no less regularity did Lady Lesingham prepare for the visit, however indisposed or occupied she might be, on Friday morning; no sooner did the time of calls approach, than she was arrayed in the old black velvet and the splendid diamonds. I used to hear her groan when putting them on in her own bedroom, as a sinner in old times might have done when assuming the shirt of penance; then she would come out and sit in the tattered chair till the countess arrived, when the same scene which I have described was rehearsed, with all its polite formalities and allusions, the meaning of which I could never guess, except that a thin crust of pretended friendship was spread as only high-breeding could do it, over some black abyss of fear and hatred that lay between them.

It was more than could be expected of any daughter of Eve to see such unaccountable doings Friday after Friday, and not feel curious to her finger-nails. Curious I was beyond description; my share of life in the grand dowager-house was not a lively one; shut up with poor Lady Lesingham in those shabby back-rooms, to which the sound of a visitor's knock or carriage-wheels might penetrate, but nothing more; permitted to go out when I had a letter to post, or a trifle to buy at the nearest shop; but all the rest of my time devoted to the amusing of her Ladyship, as became a salaried companion—the history of the diamonds interested me more than any one could imagine who was not similarly situated. The only person to whom I could venture an inquiry on the subject was Martha Mossrose. I suppose Providence intended

us all for some speciality; and Martha was undoubtedly intended for her peculiar position in the dowager's back-rooms. She was not wanting in either sound sense or sound principle, but a more unimpressible character I never saw. Entirely divested of the proverbial affectations of a lady's-maid, Martha took the opposite line; she spoke of the Lesingham family, great dowager and all, with as much plainness and as little reverence as if they had been her poor cousins; and her only amusement appeared to consist in mending old clothes. It is scarcely necessary to say that Martha shewed me no particular respect; but being considerably thrown together, we struck up a kind of official intimacy, and one day when Lady Lesingham was taking a sleep, which she generally did for a couple of hours every afternoon, except on Fridays, I contrived to turn our conversation on the diamonds, by wondering how they had escaped the fate of the family mansion and estate.

'They would have gone too, if they could have been parted with,' said Martha: 'I heard Lady Lesingham say so; and, poor soul! she would be glad enough to part with them too.'

'How is that, Martha?' said I. 'They are magnificent jewels.'

'Well, I never knew the rights of it, and maybe I never will, which is no great loss, for great families' secrets bring people more trouble than profit; but Alphonse, my Lord's French valet, told me that it was by those very diamonds she came to be Lady Lesingham. The family were all in Italy at the time, trying to recruit a bit, for the old lord, who had followed the very same games that his son has played a good deal deeper, was just dead: they were at Florence, and a lot of English gentry were there besides—I suppose there always are, spending their money abroad, you see—and among them our Lady and her mother, for the father was gone. I believe he had held some high post in India, so it was natural to think he had left them rich. Lady Tunbridge was there too, with her mother, the Dowager Lady Finchley. She was Lady Carlotta at the time, being unmarried, and the eldest of four sisters; but the Finchleys were known to be anything but well off among titled people; and the eldest daughter, not knowing exactly how his affairs stood, set her mind on Lord Lesingham as a good match. Maybe it was not entirely for a match either—you must know my Lord is one of the handsomest men in England, or was when I saw him last, in spite of his bad ways—but Miss Fenwick (that was my Lady's maiden name) had set her mind upon him too, and my Lord was rather divided between them: so was his mother the dowager: of course she wanted him to marry the richest, and could not make out which it was, till one evening, at a grand ball given by some of the Italian nobility, Miss Fenwick appeared in that very black velvet and those same diamonds you see her wearing every Friday. The velvet was new then, you may be sure, though it is old enough now, for the thing happened twenty-two years ago; and Miss Fenwick being young and fair, looked to such advantage in my Lord's eyes, and her diamonds promised so well to his mother's, that Lady Carlotta was cast overboard, and the Indian widow's daughter became Lady Lesingham. They say Lady Carlotta never forgave her for spoiling her chance, though she caught the old Earl of Tunbridge the very next

season, and he left her a good jointure the year after that. They say the dowager never forgave her daughter-in-law either, when she found out, the day after the wedding, that all the fortune there was to be had was a stock of Indian ornaments and those same diamonds. My Lord was not quite so much displeased with his bargain; and the young pair lived happily enough till their two children, Clementina and Sophia, in the drawing-room yonder—they are not worth calling ladies, the stuck-up things—were well-grown girls; then Lady Tunbridge came back from a long stay in Italy, and took to visiting them; and if Alphonse knew the reason, he never let it out to me or anybody else that I know of; but from that time my Lord and my Lady lived separate; he fell to his bad courses with a will, and you see what has come of them. But Lady Tunbridge has held on to the visiting ever since: she was at it before I came into the service. The very first Friday ever I waited on my Lady, she put on the velvet and the diamonds against her coming, exactly as she does now. Her visitor never could be got to lunch, or dine, or taste anything in their house; and it was not for want of invitations, I am told, when the friendship first began. They were long in Italy, you see, and might have learned something in the way of mixtures. I wish somebody would get her out of the way, for my Lady's sake, though maybe that's a sin; but there is something not good between her and the diamonds. And, thank Providence, that's all I know about them,' said Martha.

Her tale only made the mystery seem deeper, and acted like a whetstone to my curiosity; but no clearing up was to be expected. Lady Lesingham had been friendly with me from the first—she was naturally kind and gentle—and grew familiar as the weary weeks of my companionship in her monotonous existence went on; and the London autumn merged into the heavy London winter, with its long nights and foggy days; but weak and worn though her mind was, Lady Lesingham retained the habit and ability of rank for keeping its own secrets, and letting plebeian ears hear only what they must. She groaned over the putting on of her diamonds—she muttered over their taking off—she held her terrible rehearsals with Lady Tunbridge. How weird and ghastly the performance grew in the dreary winter-light, and more dreary silence of the great house and the deserted square! but she never uttered a word of explanation, or let fall a hint that might serve as a clew, till one day about the middle of December. It was in the middle of a week too, and the countess was not expected. The morning had been foggy, the afternoon was wet, and her Ladyship had one of those fits of restlessness to which Martha said she was subject by night as well as by day: she would not take her sleep; she would not hear me read the novels; she would not even play whist, but kept walking from her chair to the window, wondering whether or not the sky would clear up, and if she should order the carriage. That window looked into the narrow lane behind the square; and I was just thinking what a prospect the poor lady had, and how long she could stand gazing on the blackened walls and falling rain, as I bent over my own worsted work, when a shrill cry startled me; and with a look of terror which I shall never forget, Lady Lesingham

rushed by, darted into her own bedroom, and slammed the door. Instinctively, I ran to the window, to see what she had seen; there was an unkempt and ragged man, with black matted hair, a blacker beard, and an Italian face emaciated to that degree of withered wiriness which the people of the south only can attain, leaning against the opposite wall, his head bent forward, and his black eyes fixed upon the window with such intense and vindictive watchfulness, that I turned away almost as quickly as Lady Lesingham had done.

I heard her moaning in her own room, and knowing that Martha was below-stairs on some domestic errand, I went to the poor lady at once. She was sitting in a corner with her hands over her face, and trembling like one in an ague-fit. 'Has anything happened to your Ladyship?' I stammered out, scarcely knowing what to say.

'Ah, yes; something has happened, and will be always happening. Oh, Miss Fenton, you are a clever girl, but take warning; never do anything wrong in your youth, or it will follow you all your days as it has followed me; especially never do anything wrong, to get a husband, for man's love is easily turned away; but the sin and the sorrow remain.—How strangely I am talking,' she added, suddenly recovering herself; 'indeed, I am not well to-day; these dark winter-days make one so nervous; and there are bad characters about, prowling at the backs of houses, now when all the world are out of town. How long it is since I have been out of town! But dear Miss Fenton,' and her voice sunk to a whisper, 'we must keep the door at the top of the stair locked; you will see that Martha locks it, won't you?—Here she comes; for pity's sake, don't say a word about what has happened.'

Before I could answer, Martha had marched into the room, as she always did, without knocking; and the maid's countenance told me that something had gone against her mind. 'We are to be left alone this Christmas,' she said, 'and goodness knows how long after. The dowager and the girls are packing up all their best things: I'll warrant they are going to the dowager's cousin, Lady Glossop, in Heath Hall: it's somewhere in Berkshire. They have been fishing for an invitation these six weeks; and they'll stay till the London season begins, if they can. The house is to be shut up—I mean all the front of it; and all the servants are to go home on board-wages, except the cook and the kitchen-maid. They say they must get home too from Christmas eve till Boxing-day. You see they have both sweethearts, and want to get married, for which I don't blame them, poor souls; they have saved no money, and got no sense, so marrying is just the thing for them. But we shall have a lonely time of it. I don't know how you'll stand it, Miss Fenton, and I hope the house-breakers won't hear tell of how we are left; but I'll see the back-door safely barred every evening before I sit down.'

'Do, Martha,' said Lady Lesingham; and she went on concerning the bad characters that were prowling at the backs of houses, in the same incoherent strain in which she had talked to me, to which Martha, having seen nothing of the window transaction, paid no attention; but she took the first opportunity to whisper in my ear: 'That old hag of Tunbridge will have to be let in every

Friday at the back-door; I hope she'll break her neck down that steep stair of ours some day.'

The arrangements thus set forth were carried into effect within the same week. The dowager and the ladies Clementina and Sophia, her granddaughters, departed for Heath Hall. The dowager-house was shut up, like its fellow-mansions in the square; all the servants retired to their respective homes and friends, except the two damsels of the kitchen, who were supposed to be in charge, for the existence of the three in the back-rooms was not so much as acknowledged. The gloom of the situation had always fallen heavily on me, and it fell heavier now. The loss of the dowager and her establishment was not the chief cause. I had neither part nor lot in the great household from my entrance within the walls; but the sight of that ragged man with his fierce eyes fixed upon the window, made me in some degree understand the fear and foreboding that took possession of poor Lady Lesingham. She was absolutely unwilling to go out at all, even in the close carriage. She never approached the window by any chance, and got up a thousand pretexts for having the blind drawn down and the curtains closed, thus making the wintry daylight less, which, together with her restless anxiety regarding the security of the little door at the top of the stair, now our only mode of egress, called forth many a plain-spoken remonstrance from Martha. I felt myself bound in honour to tell the sturdy maid nothing of what her poor mistress had begged me for pity's sake not to mention. Perhaps it would have been better had I acted less scrupulously; but the dreary days went on in this fashion with us till Christmas eve.

It was the first Christmas I had ever spent from home. Though not a rich, we had been a happy family; and I had got up early, and occupied myself by writing long letters to my mother and sisters, whom I could not go to see, short as the distance was, and took the first opportunity to run with them to the post-office. On my way, I had to traverse the narrow lane into which the windows of Lady Lesingham's sitting-room looked, and the back-door of the mansion, as well as those of many others, opened. Though a thoroughfare, it was rather solitary at that season of the year, and I was speeding home, when about the middle of the lane I caught the shadow of a man behind me, and a hand at the same moment touched me on the shoulder. With the wild Italian in my frightened fancy, I turned quickly round; but there stood a tall and remarkably handsome man, of about middle life, as I judged, though his hat was drawn down so as to half conceal his features. 'I beg your pardon, miss,' he said, in the undertone of a fine manly voice; 'is your name Fenton?'

'It is,' said I.

'Then will you do an unlucky man the favour to hand this to Martha Mossrose without letting any one else see it?' and he put into my hand a small sealed note, made a graceful bow, and darted down a passage, which I knew led away into the close and crowded quarters of Marylebone.

'Has that unpolished gem of a maid a sweetheart, and one so well worth encouragement?' thought I, as I hurried home, and put the note into Martha's hand, where she sat in the ante-room as usual over the old clothes, at the same time telling her how it had been intrusted to me. Of course I was bent on quizzing, but the grave look

of Martha's face as she glanced at the handwriting stopped me.

'I am thankful to you, miss, for taking the trouble,' she said, slipping the note into her pocket; 'but Lady Lesingham has been fretting for you: she is not to dress till the evening to-day—it is Friday, you know. The old witch of Tunbridge has sent word that she will pay her visit then, on her way from a select dinner to a dancing party given by some old-fashioned folks who stick in town all the year, like herself.'

I found her poor Ladyship out of sorts and out of spirits to an uncommon degree; the change of her Friday performance from the afternoon to the evening seemed to have a strangely frightening effect upon her. She sat with her strip of embroidery in her hand, but scarcely moved the needle, and started at every creak of the door or window. My endeavours to cheer her up proved all in vain; and when the evening fell, she put on the black velvet and the diamonds with more than usual unwillingness, and seated herself in the accustomed chair, to wait for the countess.

A still, foggy night had fallen on London; there was silence without and within the great dower-house; the ladies of the kitchen had finished their domestic duties, and abandoned us to its solitude; Martha had gone down-stairs to make fast the door behind them, but Martha had not returned; and I was endeavouring to amuse Lady Lesingham with the *Adventures of a County Belle*, when I observed that she had escaped her troubles for the time, and fallen fast asleep in the easy-chair, and also that the wax-candles which we always used were nearly burned out. Being little burdened with what the plain-spoken maid called stuck-upness, I stole down-stairs to ask Martha for another supply. The gas was burning brightly on the stair and in the passage below, but no Martha was to be seen; the door which she had gone to secure was on the latch; was it possible that she had slipped out to an assignation? Yet there was a step somewhere in the house, and I was about to call her, when my own name called in a smothered tone made me rush up-stairs. There the first sight I saw was the wild ragged Italian twisting and pulling at the diamond necklace round Lady Lesingham's neck; while she, with a face already black and distorted, struggled hard to defend herself. Frightened almost out of my senses, I rushed out, shouting for help. That moment the outer door slammed, and the tall man who had spoken to me in the lane dashed up the stair and into the room, followed by another man of a foreign appearance and by Martha. It does not tell to the credit of my courage, but, to save my life, I could not have moved out of an angle in the narrow stair. I heard a fierce struggle in the room above, the sound of a carriage stopping at the outer door, and then, all unconscious of what awaited her, and in a flutter of gauze and ribbons fit for a ball-room belle, Lady Tunbridge came tripping up. I had just caught sight of her, when the wild Italian, with the diamond necklace and its broken snap dangling from his bony fingers, dashed down like a whirlwind, hurled the countess headlong down before him, and the next thing I saw was the furious wretch literally dancing upon her in the passage below, and shouting that he had got the old serpent under his feet. The next moment, the two men were down upon him; the tallest

wrenched the diamonds from his grasp, the other forced him away from the serpent, as he called her; and the countess's coachman rushing in to the rescue, gathered up the little woman, carried her to her carriage, and drove her home. I had got nerve enough by this time to venture up and see what had become of Lady Lesingham. She had escaped with life, but her face was still discoloured; her clothes and hair were torn; she seemed scarcely conscious; and the immovable Martha was shedding tears while getting her into bed. I did my best to assist in doing all that could be done for the poor lady, and volunteered to go for a doctor.

'You'll go for nothing of the kind, girl,' said Martha, wiping her eyes; 'we can't have strangers here till it is all settled. But just step into the other room,' she added, as the tall man softly entered; 'this gentleman has a better right to be here than any of us, and you're not one of the family.'

I stepped into the other room accordingly. The shouts of the Italian were silenced by this time, but I could hear a man speaking in a low persuasive voice down-stairs; then the outer door was quietly shut, and steps moved quickly away. There was low and earnest speech in Lady Lesingham's bedroom also; it went on for some time; but at last the tall man came out wiping his eyes, and walked straight up to me where I sat, trembling like an aspen-leaf, beside the sitting-room fire.

'Miss Fenton,' he said, 'you have been dutiful and kind to my poor wife, who lies yonder never likely to be herself again.—Yes, you may well look surprised, but I am Lord Lesingham, the last of one of the noblest lines in England, obliged to steal into my own mother's house under the cloud of night on Christmas eve, when all the servants are gone out of sight and hearing. But I deserve it; it was all my own doing. I am a landless man, and an outlaw. There are those who would reward you handsomely for letting them know that I am here. Don't be annoyed; I know you are far above such an action. As I said, you have been a kindly companion to my poor wife; you have seen her sore vexation; and I want to explain the whole matter to you before I go. Those cursed diamonds which you have seen her wear so often, once belonged to the Countess de Capella, an old Italian lady, the maternal grandmother of a college acquaintance of mine, Sir George Pemberton. They have a proverb in Italy, according to which an Italianised Englishman is a near approach to the prince of evil-doers; and I think it was proved true in Sir George's case. From his English father and his Italian mother he appeared to have inherited the worst qualities of both peoples, without any of their good ones. You will think me prejudiced, for Sir George and I were enemies almost from our first meeting. We got into each other's way on every possible occasion—our aims and purposes always crossed. I suppose the Fates had a hand in it; but in the long-run I had little reason to like Sir George; and Sir George hated me as only people of Italian blood can hate. That amiable feeling of his rose to the highest pitch in Florence, where my mother and I resided, for family reasons, a year or two after my majority. I had always been more successful with the ladies, for he was an ill-looking man; and Miss Fenwick, to whom he chose to pay attentions, shewed a

preference for me. She has been my wife these twenty-two years, and had little comfort in her husband; but Sir George hated me worse for her sake.

'His grandmother lived in her own villa near Florence, old and rich, widowed and childless, for her daughter, Lady Pemberton, was gone long ago, and she had quarrelled with all the Pemberton family—I think on the subject of dowry. She had quarrelled with all her own relations too, one after another. But the *contessa*, as the Italians called her, had a page named Cosmo Bachini (some said a near relative), and rather hare-brained. He had run away a dozen times—had sung in theatres, and got into scrapes, and been brought back; but he stood so high in the *contessa's* favour and confidence, perhaps as the only creature she cared for, that no jewel-drawer or casket was locked from him; and having nothing to do, and money at command, he dressed like a signor, lounged in the piazzas, and appeared in all public places. He was but a youth, and his evil stars sent him to fall in love with my poor Clara. She was always a pretty woman, though I have neglected her; and maybe she encouraged the boy for her own amusement, as women will. At anyrate, he was so far led on as to bring her a suite of diamonds, heirlooms in the Capella family, which the old *contessa* kept strictly treasured up, but had not worn for twenty years. At first, I believe, it was only as a loan, to astonish the natives with at a great ball, and make an impression on my mother's mind, for she was not favourably disposed to Miss Fenwick. But that same night the old *contessa* died suddenly. The diamonds dazzled my poor Clara's eyes. She had gained such glory by them at the ball, and gained over my mother too (Heaven forgive her own mother, for she must have connived at the business). In short, Clara kept the diamonds, and kept the poor page in her leash till she married me; and Cosmo was taken to the lunatic asylum a week after.

'I knew nothing of all this at the time we came home to England; years passed, and Clara wore the diamonds as if they had been her own inheritance. We heard that Sir George Pemberton had been advertising and inquiring far and near for certain jewels which his grandmother had bequeathed to him with other family property, to return after his death to the Capellas; but that was all that came to my knowledge, till Lady Tunbridge came back from a winter's sojourn in Florence. She had resided in the *contessa's* villa, which Sir George thought proper to let, and found in the drawer of an old neglected cabinet part of the correspondence between Clara and the unlucky page, in which the story of the diamonds was made plainly manifest. The evidence of those letters would have been sufficient to place Lady Lesingham in a convict's cell, and involve the family in her disgrace; their discovery would have been the triumph of Sir George's hatred; and it was the triumph of Lady Tunbridge's too, for Clara had been her successful rival; but her mode of enjoying the victory was peculiar. I think the inventor of all evil must have personally prompted the woman when she contrived to make my poor wife sit to receive her visit in those diamonds every Friday, because on that day she had appeared in them and eclipsed her at the ball; and with those condemn-

ing letters in her hands, and Sir George Pemberton in the background, Lady Tunbridge had to get her terms. She has stuck to them ever since. My poor wife's mind has failed under the long and miserable bondage; I have got disgusted with my bargain, and gone the whole length of the road to ruin. However, the Fates have done us one good turn at last: Sir George Pemberton was shot dead in a duel on the Roman frontier on Friday week; it was a Frenchman that did it; and if my blessing were worth anything, he and his whole nation should get it for the fact. The heir-at-law to the old *contessa's* leavings is Cardinal Capella, her far-away cousin, and as good a man as ever wore red stockings. When I heard of the transaction, I went to his Eminence, and in a manner confessed to him about the diamonds. Roman cardinal as he is, he spoke to me more wisely and kindly than ever did a parson of my own English Church, gave me a solemn pledge that nothing should ever be made public regarding the long and vainly sought jewels, and sent me to England with his own chaplain to get them restored with strict secrecy to the lawful heir, and thus put an end to the horrid visits of Lady Tunbridge.

'It was strange that poor Cosmo, after being discharged as cured from the lunatic asylum, should have found his way to England, and got into this house in a relapse of insanity, at the very moment when Martha came to tell me that all the servants were out of the way (an outlawed man cannot trust his mother's domestics), and that he should have fallen on the countess in her hour of triumph, and half-avenged our years of bondage. The good chaplain knew the page in his better days, and will take him back to his native country and, I suppose, his old quarters. For myself, I must go as quickly as I can get out of England, and back to the cardinal with these dreadful diamonds. Now, you know all, Miss Fenton. Be kind to my poor wife, as you have been; and if better days should ever come to me, I will not forget it. Farewell. God bless you, and send you many a happier Christmas than this is like to be!' He shook my hand warmly; and before I could find words to reply, he had stepped into the bedroom, took one last look at Lady Lesingham where she lay between stupor and sleep, spoke some words to Martha, and hurried down-stairs.

In a few minutes more we were alone again in the great house, with all the doors securely barred, and watching together by Lady Lesingham's bed.

'I would fetch the family doctor but for that black mark about her neck,' said Martha. 'I hope it will shew less in the morning; she sleeps quietly now.'

We sat there; and the poor lady slept till the Christmas chimes began to ring out over London; then she woke up, and asked with such a simple, child-like look for whose wedding it was that all the bells were ringing! 'Christmas!' said she, when we told her; 'is it come again? I remember Christmas parties long ago in Calcutta, and the midnight mass we heard in the cathedral of Florence, where I first saw Sydney. Do you know I dreamed that he came here to-night, and told me that Lady Tunbridge would never come here again!' and with a sigh of relief, she laid down her head and fell asleep once more. We thought her reason was entirely gone, and watched till the morning; but Lady Lesingham rose late in the next

day, much the same that I had ever seen her, except that her neck was more carefully covered. However, the black mark wore away in time; and if any trace of its terrible occasion remained in Lady Lesingham's memory, she never recurred to it, nor shewed any recollection of the whole diamond business, except that for some few Fridays after her Ladyship got rather fidgety towards the afternoon. That also wore away. The dowager and her grand-daughters came back, and so did the servants. Soon after their return, Lord Lesingham made a public arrival at his mother's house, having first made an arrangement with his creditors. It was said that Cardinal Capella had befriended him in the transaction, but to what extent nobody could tell. However, his Lordship came back an altered man in the best sense, obtained possession of his family mansion, and took his poor lady to live with him there in retirement, but, I believe, in comfort too. Before they set out for the country, I resigned my office of companion, because Cousin Frederick had got a legal appointment through the influence of the Lesingham connection, and was in a position to ask mamma. And Martha Mossrose said she was sure herself and her lady could do without me now. I understand that the discontented-looking girls remained with their grandmother, and by unparalleled exertions in London seasons and watering-places, she got them married to aspiring men in the mercantile line. I also heard that Lady Tunbridge never completely recovered from the effects of a terrible accident which she met with—how, her fashionable friends could never clearly make out—on her way to a dancing-party one Christmas eve. Half the doctors in London were consulted, and all the spas in Europe tried without avail; her Ladyship's health could not be restored, and her Ladyship's mind was equally out of order, for she was finally placed by her relatives under the care of a physician who kept an establishment for ladies of highly sensitive temperaments; and it was said that the disturbing topic of her days and nights was Lady Lesingham's diamonds.

EUROPEAN LAWS OF NATURALISATION.

EVERY independent government, says Lord Hathorley, has the right of controlling the actions of all who reside within its territories. In the exercise of that right, it has to deal with two distinct classes—those who are its subjects, and form part of the nation of which the government represents the collective will; and those who are subjects of another state, and whose condition, in many respects, both as to rights and duties, is very different. But while it is easy to say these two classes exist in almost every country, it is by no means so easy to say by what criterion they are to be distinguished. The Appendix to the Report of the Royal Commissioners on the Laws of Naturalisation and Allegiance, which is, in fact, a collection of the naturalisation laws of most civilised countries, shews the difficulty that has been experienced in endeavouring to fix that criterion; for we find, that in dealing with the most delicate of international questions, European legislation has been as perversely inconsistent as if its very purpose were the creation of opportunities for unpleasant and dangerous disagreements.

England, however, has no right to reproach her

neighbours on this score, seeing she has been the worst offender of all; for, while she has insisted upon claiming authority over every individual born under the shadow of her flag, whatever the individual's parentage might be, she has, with audacious inconsistency, denied the right of any other government to the allegiance of the offspring of British subjects born on its soil. Spain would seem to be as grasping, since the Constitution of 1845 declares: 'The following are Spanish subjects—all persons born within the dominions of Spain; the children of a Spanish father or mother, even though born without the Spanish dominions;' but then a royal decree, promulgated in 1852, says those persons born within Spanish territory of alien parents, or of an alien father and Spanish mother, are to be deemed as aliens. Spanish lawyers may be able to reconcile these two declarations—it is more than we can do. France, Belgium, Austria, Hungary, Prussia, Württemberg, Bavaria, Baden, the Hanse Towns, Greece, Russia, Sweden, Saxony, Switzerland, and Italy, all agree in holding that the nationality of the father is transmitted to his children, wherever they may be born, except in cases of illegitimacy, when the mother's nationality decides that of the child. In Italy, although the above is the acknowledged rule, if an alien has resided there uninterruptedly, and not merely for commercial purposes, for ten years, his children are reckoned to be Italians, unless they themselves declare the contrary upon attaining full age. In Denmark, the son of an alien, born in Denmark, is to all intents and purposes a Dane, so long as he remains in the country. In Portugal, the children born to a foreigner (unless he is merely residing there as an official in the service of his own country) are held to be Portuguese in default of their guardians making a formal declaration against the naturalisation—a declaration the parties concerned can have annulled if they think fit, upon arriving at their majority. In all continental countries, a woman, native or alien, acquires by marriage the nationality of her husband.

An Englishman who for pleasure, profit, or health's sake, takes up his residence upon the continent, cannot reasonably expect to find himself on a footing of equality with the natives; if, being unreasonable, he does so expect, he will be disappointed. He will find that, politically speaking, he is a nonentity, incapable of holding any public office, performing any official functions, or taking part in elections either as candidate or voter—in Austria, he must not even take a prominent part at any political meeting, or belong to a political association. He is not likely to grieve at not being permitted to serve as jurymen. So far as regards offices of trust under government, and offices connected with municipal administration, this is only a necessary consequence of the administering of an oath of allegiance to those who occupy such situations. A foreigner cannot act as advocate, notary, attorney, or arbitrator in France, Austria, Russia, Saxony, Belgium, or Greece; nor hold any professorship in an Austrian or Saxon educational establishment, university, or institute. In France, he is debarred from practising as a doctor without special authorisation, and in Austria must pass an examination before he can act as physician, surgeon, accoucheur, or apothecary. In Bavaria, he may obtain permission to do so for a limited period, and may 'give consultations' without even that. The

armies of France, Switzerland, and Austria are closed against unnaturalised foreigners, and although those of Bavaria and Sweden are open to them, they cannot command a Swedish fortress, or fill any superior post in the Bavarian service. In Sweden, neither real nor personal estate can be vested in an alien without permission from the crown, unless he belongs to a country in which Swedes have an equal privilege. The Prussian law allows landed property to be held by an alien, but he cannot purchase estates or manor-houses belonging to the nobility. Lübeck, Bremen, and Hamburg forbid the acquisition of houses or lands within their territories, but a foreigner may buy land in the name of a citizen as his trustee. In the first two cities, an alien is even forbidden to carry on any trade; in Sweden, he must not be the managing owner of a Swedish vessel, or own more than a third of it; and in Bavaria, he must get a permit for travelling if he wishes to carry on any wandering trade, or comes under the category of journeymen, servants, or trade-assistants. If a foreigner desires to commence a public business in Austria, it is not sufficient to give notice to the Board of Trade of his intended project, but a special concession of the Home Department is required in addition, and that concession will not be given to any one wishing to set up as agent of exchange, or hawker. In Sweden, too, a special permission is requisite before an alien can exercise his abilities in trade, manufacture, mechanical employment, or any other calling. Prussia professes to allow all the trading privileges of its own subjects to the resident alien, if the state from which he hails does not impose burdensome regulations upon Prussians in particular, or foreigners in general; but for all that, the thing cannot be done until permission has been obtained from the Minister of the Interior. If he wishes to commit matrimony in that liberal land, it is not sufficient that an alien fulfils all the legal requirements of Prussian law: 'Foreigners who are desirous of contracting a marriage in Prussia, either with a native or a foreigner, must, in addition to fulfilling the other legal requirements, prove by a certificate, properly attested by the local authorities of their home, that they are permitted by the laws of their country, without hindrance to their state allegiance, to contract a marriage abroad, or that they have received, in accordance with these laws, the necessary permission for the contracting of the proposed marriage.'

Portugal, Italy, Holland, Russia, and Würtemberg appear to be the most liberal in their treatment of aliens. All foreigners in the first-named country possess the same rights, and are subject to the same civic duties, as Portuguese citizens, as far as regards any act to be carried out there. By the civil code of Italy, the alien is admitted to the enjoyment of all civil rights accorded to the citizen. In Holland, an alien is eligible for government employment as consul, consul-general, consular-agent, chancellor in missions or consulates; as chief, subordinate, teacher or official in government establishments connected with science, art, or education; as official in the telegraphic and steam-machinery departments; as employé in mines, director of entrepôts, inspector of small-arms, die-sinker at the government offices, and engraver to any department. Aliens who have served their twelve years in the army and navy may be appointed clerks, skippers, or gaugers in

the revenue department; watchers, porters, or boom-closers in fortresses; toll-keepers, sluice-keepers, or employés in military hospitals or other departments of the military supply service. In Russia, a foreigner is not only permitted to become a landholder, but as such is qualified to vote for members of the rural assemblies, or to sit as member himself. While generally barred out of the civil service, exceptions are made in favour of professional and scientific men, such as physicians, surgeons, apothecaries, architects, engineers, and professors of art and science, who may acquire any rank attached to their capacities. Aliens, too, can attain any grade in the Russian army; and if fortunate enough to reach that of lieutenant-general, general, or field-marshal, may be appointed senator and member of the council of the empire. Würtemberg alien law is based upon reciprocity. An alien wishing to establish himself in any trade, has only to prove his nationality, and, if required, shew that Würtembergers would be allowed in his own country the freedom he desires. This, however, is very seldom insisted upon; and the Würtembergers are justified in saying, like their brethren of Baden, that, within the compass of private rights, aliens stand upon a footing of complete equality with natives. But the authorities claim the right to summarily expel any foreigner rendering himself obnoxious to the public peace or the government. In Belgium, the right of expulsion is used when an alien fails to shew the sources of his subsistence, when he is guilty of scandalous, immoral, or turbulent conduct, or of conspiring against the tranquillity of a friendly state. The French law is still more imperative, the government being authorised at its pleasure to expel any foreigner either travelling or residing in its dominions, and this right of the government 'is arbitrary and absolute.'

Naturalisation is obtainable in various ways, by royal decree, by favour, by domicile, by merit, and by purchase. In France it assumes two forms, known as 'la grande' and 'la petite.' The latter, which does not carry the right of sitting in the chambers, is acquired by letters of declaration, after three years' domicile, providing the individual seeking it has good antecedents and is of full age. 'La grande naturalisation' is conferred by the government when the recipient of the favour has resided one year in the country, and has earned it by rendering important services to the state, introducing some great industry or useful invention, or founding some great works, agricultural or commercial. Some authorities, however, hold that this species of naturalisation no longer exists, since a decree issued in 1852 declared all electors eligible to sit in the Corps Législatif, while the Senate is composed of such citizens as the Emperor pleases to nominate. The law of Belgium is similar to that of France, except that the 'grande naturalisation' can only be conferred by an act of the legislature; and that if once a declaration of naturalisation is made by an alien, he is considered never to have been a foreigner, the act having a retroactive effect, making it date from the period of birth. In Prussia, the police authorities have the power of granting deeds of naturalisation to aliens, providing they have led an irreproachable life, and have means of subsistence sufficient to maintain themselves and family, the naturalisation extending to the wife and minor children; but if one of them

can be shewn not to be of blameless character, the whole family are barred from being accepted as Prussian subjects. Spanish certificates of naturalisation are to be gained by a three years' domicile, with possession of real property, or the exercise of a trade, profession, or recognised mode of livelihood in Spanish territory. Letters of naturalisation are granted by the Portuguese executive to foreigners able to maintain themselves, after one year's residence; and this is dispensed with in the case of an alien married to a Portuguese woman, or one who has rendered, or may be called upon to render, any great service to the nation; but a naturalised citizen cannot become a minister or councillor of state, or be elected parliamentary deputy. An appointment to any public situation under the state carries naturalisation with it in Prussia, Württemberg, and Austria. In the last, the rights of citizenship can be conferred by the government upon any alien who has exercised a profession in the country for ten years. Bavarian naturalisation is obtainable by simple domicile, upon bringing proof of liberation from personal allegiance to any foreign state, or by royal decree. Hamburg does not even ask the renunciation of native allegiance, but allows all the privileges of citizenship after six months' residence, upon the payment of a small fee. In some of the Swiss cantons the acts of naturalisation are granted only by the legislature, in others by the executive, and in most of them the enjoyment of the privileges conferred date from the granting of the act; but in Tessin, a naturalised foreigner cannot exercise native rights before five years have expired; and in Thurgovia the same time must elapse before he becomes eligible for any government office.

Aliens are assimilated to Netherlands subjects when, in virtue of permission from the king, they have established their domicile for six years in the same commune, and announced their intention to claim the privilege to the communal authorities. In Italy, citizenship is a local privilege, answering something to our 'freedom of the city;' but naturalisation, which confers just the same benefit, and is perhaps a distinction without a difference, can only be decreed by the crown; and then, to be of any effect, the decree must, within six months, be registered by the chief authority of the locality in which the individual concerned intends to abide. With the exception of admission into the council of state, all the rights enjoyed by Swedish subjects are open to foreigners of good repute, sufficient means, and full age, who have resided three years in the kingdom; but the crown only has power to grant them, and before it will exercise the power, the would-be Swede must send in an application setting forth his age, nationality, the date of his coming into the country, his character and religious faith. Should this prove satisfactory, all that remains to be done is to sign a formal resignation of all the privileges and rights he may possess in his native land, and to take the oath of allegiance. Russia does not place many difficulties in the way of foreigners desirous of becoming subjects of the czar. The first thing necessary is domicile, which the alien can get by intimating to the governor of the province of his choice, that he desires to dwell therein, and stating what occupation he followed when at home, and what he purposes to do when settled in Russia. After five years of domiciliation, he can, by merely taking the oath of allegiance,

transform himself into a Russian, provided the Minister of the Interior has no objection. In special cases, the period of domicile can be shortened, and that qualification is waived altogether for foreigners in government employment, and ecclesiastics of foreign persuasions. The allegiance, when sworn, does not bind the children of the taker of the oath, if born before the event; but those born afterwards are acknowledged to share the new nationality of their parent.

By the laws of Baden, any one born in the country of a foreign parent is entitled, within the year after attaining his majority, to claim the rights of a native-born subject, upon declaring his intention to fix his abode there, and actually settling in the country within twelve months of making the declaration. The same facility of acquiring naturalisation is accorded to native-born aliens in France, Belgium, Italy, Greece, Holland, Spain, Switzerland, and Russia, the last-named state extending the privilege to all children of foreigners who have been educated, or have completed their education, in an upper or middle Russian school. Women who have lost their nationality by marriage, are generally permitted to regain it upon widowhood, by notifying that such is their desire.

If the acquirement of citizenship in a foreign country be a troublesome matter, it is a far less difficult one than obtaining release from one's old allegiance. It is much easier to be on with the new love than to be off with the old one. Surely the different states might come to some common understanding on the subject of expatriation; as it is, law clashes with law, as if the object of the law-makers was the creation of 'difficulties' that ought to be impossible. It is hard to understand how any state can allow foreigners to enrol themselves among its subjects, and at the same time deny the right of its own citizens to transfer their allegiance. Such is the case, however, with three at least of the great powers—England, France, and Prussia. Once an Englishman always an Englishman, has hitherto been the doctrine held by England, a doctrine she has been consistent enough to carry out to the conclusion that a native cannot lose his nationality under any circumstances. France and Prussia are not so logical; for while they deny the right of their subjects to expatriate themselves, they declare that by so doing they lose their nationality, awarding as a penalty the very thing the offender has done all in his power to bring about; but with an unpleasant addendum in the shape of a liability to be called to account if he ever ventures to pay a visit to his native land. A Frenchman, furthermore, loses his nationality by entering the service of a foreign power, and if found bearing arms against France, is liable to the punishment of death. A Prussian ceases to be a Prussian by discharge at his own request, by sentence of competent authorities, by leaving the kingdom for ten years without permission, by staying out of it ten years longer than he has received permission to do, or by refusing to obey a summons to return. Discharges are not granted to actual soldiers, to officers or public functionaries, or to those who have served as such, unless they obtain the consent of their former chief. Nor can any man between the ages of seventeen and twenty-five obtain a discharge unless he produces a certificate shewing that the application is not

made in order to escape serving in the army; and before a Prussian can get permission to emigrate into any state of the confederacy, he must furnish some proof that the state in question is willing to receive him. The acceptance of employment under another government is, in most continental countries, held destructive to nationality; and in Austria, Bavaria, Württemberg, and Italy, emigration, properly enough, entails the same consequences. In Russia, special rules exist regarding naturalised foreigners who wish to renounce their naturalisation, and return to their native country. Before departing from Russia, they must satisfy all claims against them, whether public or private; and to obtain permission to export their belongings, pay a sum equal to three years' taxes. Those who throw off their Russian allegiance can still remain in the country, upon providing themselves with national passports, within a year, if resident in European Russia, or belonging to a country in Europe; or within two years, if residing in Siberia, or having to obtain such passports in any other quarter of the globe. On the lapse of those dates, without he produces the passport, the foreigner must either leave the country, or resume his Russian nationality.

The desirability of simplifying naturalisation laws generally, and bringing them to something like accordance, is beyond argument. The following statistics (which extend a little beyond the limits of the heading of this paper) shew what a great number of people are affected by them. When the last British census was taken, there were 2,544,101 British-born folks in foreign lands, of which number all save 67,969 were to be found in the United States. Of these last, France counted 25,844; * Germany, 4508; Italy, 4413; Chili, 4152; Belgium, 4092; Spain, 3879; Russia, 3749; Brazil, 2838; Turkey, 2360; Portugal, 2072; Prussia, 1685; Austria and Hungary, 1172; Switzerland, 1124; China, 1072; Rome, 1054; Egypt, 931; Holland, 827; Greece, 525; Sweden, 411; Denmark, 372; Morocco, 340; Norway, 242; Central America, 145; Japan, 81; Persia, 30; Ecuador, 27; and Siam, 24. At the same time, there were living in England and Wales 84,090 foreigners, of whom Germany supplied 21,438; France, 12,989; the United States, 7861; Prussia, 7206; Holland, 5512; Italy, 4489; Norway, 3161; Poland, 3616; Denmark, 2534; Switzerland, 2341; Belgium, 2031; Sweden, 1801; Austria, 1669; Mexico, Brazil, and other South American states, 1641; Russia, 1633; Spain, 1337; Greece, 574; Portugal, 527; Africa, 518; Asia, 358; Turkey, 331; and Hungary, 245. Of every hundred, thirty-six were born in Germany, Austria, and Prussia, sixteen in France, nine in the United States, and thirty-nine in the rest of the world; more than half the whole number being domiciled in London.

But a small proportion of the foreign element among us think it worth while to become naturalised, for only 5385 persons did so in the twenty-one and a half years ending in June 1868. Of these, 1348 were Germans, 1239 Prussians, 380 French, 324 Poles, 310 Italians, and 305 Austrians; 265 were natives of the Hanse Towns, 209 of Switzerland, 183 of Turkey, 166 of Russia, 156 of

Denmark; there were 126 Dutchmen, 125 Bavarians, 119 Swedes and Norwegians, 118 Belgians, 102 Greeks, 89 children of Uncle Sam, 50 Spaniards, 24 Portuguese, and 8 South Americans—about three-fifths of the naturalised being of German birth. In the same period, only nine foreigners obtained acts of naturalisation, conferring the right of sitting in parliament, and serving the Queen as privy-councillor. It would be interesting to compare this record with a similar return of British subjects who have transferred their allegiance to other countries; but, unfortunately, the figures are not forthcoming.

REINDEER HUNTING.

THE neighbourhood of the Bygdin, Gjende, and Tyen Lakes, some few miles to the north-east of the Fille Fjeld, has long been a favourite resort for tourists in search of the picturesque. And, indeed, the purity of the atmosphere in those parts, coupled with the grand scenery that may there be enjoyed, are doubtless an ample compensation for all the trouble and rough work that have to be countered in reaching spots which lie rather out of the beaten tracks of ordinary travellers.

But long, long before any tourist set his foot on these desert wilds, they were already well known to a class of people, whose passion for roaming over the high fields was as great, as ardent as that of any Alpine clamberer of modern days. I refer to the reindeer hunters of Norway, a hardy race indeed; one that shuns no danger, deems no hardship too severe, so long as they can hunt the reindeer amid its native wilds. It is of them I purpose to write; but before doing so, a preliminary and brief sketch of the reindeer itself will, I trust, not be without interest to your readers.

The does calve in early spring. At this season, of course, the reindeer are free from molestation at the hunters' hands; but not the less have they numerous enemies to contend against. Indeed, I question much whether any animal—bird, beast, or fish—is so exposed to peril as the reindeer.

At the period in question, the glutton is its mortal foe. With unwearied pertinacity, it follows on the reindeer's tracks; and no sooner does it perceive that parturition has taken place, than it rushes on the poor mother, who, in her weak and exhausted condition, is unable to repel the foe, and thus doe and young often fall victims to their relentless enemy.

Later on in the summer, moreover, they are exposed to the merciless onslaught of those myriads of mosquitoes and stinging flies with which Norway abounds. No peace for them then on the lowlands, where the grass grows so luxuriantly. If they would have any quiet, any enjoyment of life, they must seek the shelter of those snowy patches high up on the field side, which, happily for them, seldom if ever melt. On hot, still days, therefore, the reindeer frequent the highest parts of the mountains, but always on that side against which the wind blows; for instinct tells them that their keen sense of smell will warn them of the approach of any foe from that quarter; while, at the same time, their quick eye would speedily detect any moving object over the unbroken surface of a snowy plain. Here they are comparatively safe. But alas! at these great

* This was the number of English domiciled in France, temporary sojourners not being enumerated.

heights, the means of subsistence are but scanty; the vegetable world is poorly represented there, and though their wants are but few, and are easily satisfied, yet the pangs of hunger will at last be felt even in a reindeer's stomach, and will compel him to leave his secure retreat.

In summer-time, the bucks and does do not usually herd together; for while the cares of her offspring occupy the attention of the latter, the buck, as if he disdained such lowly avocations, retires in dignified contempt to the most sequestered spots he can find.

The experienced hunter is, of course, well acquainted with all these movements. He has made the habits of the reindeer his special study, and it has taught him this practical rule, that the hotter the weather, the higher up in the mountains will deer be found; while the lower the temperature, the nearer will they descend to the inviting pasture on the lowlands. Besides this general rule, he knows well that the wind plays a very important part in the movements of these animals. Reindeer always travel against the wind, and thus tracts which may one day be covered with them, will, if the wind shifts, be without a single hoof on the following day.

Such is the reindeer's life till the month of October. At this period a great change takes place, and the bucks, getting weary of their bachelorhood up among the snowy crags, seek the society of the does. The pairing season has set in; the most interesting epoch in the reindeer's life. Their habits at this period are so worthy of notice, that I must give a brief description of the occurrences which then usually take place.

The does, as I have said, congregate in herds, and each herd is under the command of a large buck, or *haldar*, as he is termed. Perhaps a strange buck is desirous of joining the company; as may be imagined, the *haldar* resents the intrusion. A fierce conflict ensues, which, for its rage and fury, is scarcely surpassed among any of the representatives of the animal world. Rearing up on their hind-quarters, they strike violently out with their fore-legs, sparring and feinting like prize-fighters; and when this round is over, they will retire a few paces, fronting each other the while; and presently, as if some herald had given the signal for the charge, they dash against one another with lightning-like rapidity, so that the splinters from their antlers fly far and wide. Stunned by the onset, a pause ensues, when the fight begins once more, and continues till one or other gains the day. Need it be said that the arena where the combat has taken place is easily recognised by the splinters of horns, the tufts of hair, and patches of blood that bestrew it, while the trampled-down earth plainly shews that the fight was obstinately contested? The victor, of course, takes his place at the head of the herd, while the vanquished slinks ignominiously off. But it often happens that the victory has been dearly bought. Another claimant appears—another conflict takes place—and our old friend the *haldar*, though he may be the conqueror of a hundred battles, at last gets so wearied and worn, that he too, in turn, has to succumb to the attacks of some more youthful and vigorous rival.

Meanwhile, the does stand quietly gazing on, apparently enjoying the fun, even if they are not quite so demonstrative as Spanish ladies are at a

bull-fight. Their love seems to be of a very general type. Possibly, however, the poor things know that it matters but little to them which of the two bucks may gain the day, for experience has taught them that whoever be their lord and master, they will have no very enjoyable time of it, for no eastern sultan ever bullies the ladies of his harem more than does the *haldar* the does that compose his herd. During this season, the does are generally closely packed in a ring, outside of which they are not permitted to pass. But females, I am told, never did assemble in any numbers without doing something they ought not to do; so possibly this may be the cause why yonder venturesome doe transgresses the prescribed boundary. Poor thing! A furious charge from the *haldar*, which dashes her to the ground, teaches her and her companions a lesson that the commands of their lord are not to be trifled with; or if he be more gentle and merciful than bucks in general, he may perhaps only place his antlers under her stomach, and quietly pitch her back into the very midst of her trembling companions, a gentle hint that another time she may not meet with such a slight punishment.

It is only, however, during the commencement of the rutting season that the *haldar's* jurisdiction is monarchical; for when all the necessary blood has been shed, an honourable peace is agreed, and the young bucks are permitted to take a subordinate position in the herd. Then all goes on happily enough; every one knows his place and his power, and seldom seeks to overstep them.

The deer now shed their horns, and as at this season the snow begins to fall, they are safe for a while from the 'snares of the hunter.' The cream of the reindeer hunting season may be gathered in September and in the early part of October. The scanty hay and corn crops are harvested, and the hunter accordingly lays aside the sickle and the scythe for the trusty rifle, and repairs to the fields, taking up his abode in the now deserted *seters* or *châlets*, whence the cattle have long since been driven back to the home farm. More frequently, however, he has to build for himself a shooting-hut, the architecture of which is of so simple a nature that a few lines will suffice to describe it. A hollow square of stones is formed, arranged so as to fit into each other as closely as may be; and if the builder has a special eye to comfort, he stuffs up the interstices with lichen. A small aperture at the top of the structure is left for the smoke to escape out of, and the fabric of the hut is complete. Let us now look at the internal arrangements. Immediately underneath the smoke-hole, a primitive fireplace is constructed; a bench is set up along one side of the wall, broad enough for a couple of men to sleep on; and there you have the shooting-box furnished. A hole in one side serves as a door through which the hunter has to creep on all-fours.

The area of such a 'box' is usually about six or eight feet square. To stand upright in one of them is simply impossible, and were you even able to do so, you would quickly change your position for a recumbent one, to avoid asphyxiation, as the smoke, which finds its way out as best it can through the hole above, would simply choke you were you to get on your legs. But the reindeer hunters are well contented with their huts; and

so long as they keep out wind and weather, they do not trouble their heads about luxuries!

Having glanced at their shooting-boxes, let us say a word or two about their paraphernalia. As may be supposed, simplicity and serviceableness are here again the desiderata. It is of great importance, of course, that the clothes the hunter wears should be of an unobtrusive character; accordingly, he selects colours for his garments which resemble those of the surrounding *terrain* as closely as possible. A light gray, mixed with a brownish hue, is deemed most suitable; so that the white jacket and light yellow breeches, the characteristic dress of the Valdres peasantry, when well matured and begrimed by age and wear, are better adapted for the purpose than any other costume in the world perhaps. The clothes he has on his back constitute his only wardrobe, excepting perhaps an extra pair of worsted stockings; and if he gets wet, an occurrence which happens well nigh every day, he either strips to the skin, or else lets his garments dry on his back. But though thus regardless of a change of dress, he is by no means forgetful of the requirements of the inner man: his knapsack is well stocked with a supply of *flad-brød* and butter, a little dried meat, cheese, and plenty of coffee; for coffee is a beverage which a Norwegian cannot do without, and I question much whether there are a hundred individuals in the whole peninsula from Hammerfest to Christian-sand who pass the day without their *kop* of it.

The rifles in vogue are generally of heavy calibre, and, with but few exceptions, the old-fashioned round bullets are used. They will carry with precision to a distance of about four hundred feet, a range usually found quite sufficient.

Reindeer hunters usually hunt in couples, not only for company's sake, but for the mutual help and assistance that the one can render to the other; for it is unsafe to go alone on the mountains when the autumn sets in. A sprained ankle, a fall, or any other of those innumerable accidents to which a hunter on the high fields is especially exposed, might easily prove fatal were no mate near to lend a helping hand.

With these preliminary remarks, I will ask my readers to accompany two of the old native reindeer hunters on their annual expedition to the fields in the beginning of September.

They have reached the old shooting-box, we will suppose, the previous evening, which they make as comfortable as their means permit them. The indoor arrangements being completed, the next thing to see after is a supply of juniper-bushes and heather, to serve partly for a bed, partly for fuel. A cheery fire soon blazes on the hearth; the coffee-pot is quickly in requisition; and after partaking of a frugal meal, they lose no time in wooing sleep, which seldom refuses to weigh down a hunter's eyelids, and steep his senses in sweet oblivion, or else set him to dream of what he will do on the morrow. Every now and then, one or other of them wakes up, puts on a fresh supply of fuel, and lays himself down to rest once more till the first faint glow of morning peeps over the mountain ridge.

The morning toilet and breakfast are quickly over, consisting respectively of a shake and a bowl of hot coffee; for they are anxious to be off, and they have some distance to go before reaching their hunting-ground. At first, there is no great need

for silence; but as they draw near to the desired ground, their whole demeanour changes. Not a word is spoken now—every sense is on the alert.

To proceed against the wind is, I need scarcely say, a matter of the greatest moment, but, of course, not always practicable. In such cases, the advance must be made very cautiously. Accordingly, our hunters never get on the ridge of a hill, for the quick eye of a reindeer would soon detect a human form against the clear blue sky. Crawling up, they just peer over, and take a steady and scrutinising survey of the ground on the other side, and not till they have satisfied themselves that the coast is clear, do they venture to stand upright, for they know well that this is an operation which must not be hurried. Every hollow, every rock, must be well and carefully scanned.

The progress, therefore, that our two friends have made is probably not great; for not only do they stop every now and then to sweep the horizon with their telescopes, but they seldom walk in a direct line, at least for any distance, deeming it best to quarter their ground after the manner of a well-trained pointer.

Let us now suppose the time to be noon, and our hunters to be on fresh spoor. The sun, of course, is in the zenith, and as they know that at this time of day the deer are enjoying their siesta, so do our hunters deem it well to follow their example. There is an old saying to the effect that 'the best time for a hunter to see reindeer is when he is eating or resting.' Anxious looks are therefore cast around, while the bread and butter and the coffee are under discussion; and should nothing shew itself, they take a little snooze, not both at once, but one at a time, and then awaking like giants refreshed, they set out once more.

Something has occurred! One of the hunters, while cautiously peering over the ridge of a hill, evidently sees something. He looks as if he were suddenly petrified—as if he had become part and parcel of the rock on which he is lying. After remaining in this posture for a few minutes, he lets himself slip back down the slope up which he had wormed his way, till he joins his expectant comrade below. 'A buck, three does, and two hinds!' is the whispered news. 'They are grazing under Svartekneipe yonder' (the name of a mountain). They are not more than two thousand paces distant; but how are they to get within shot? It is a knotty point, for it is a dead calm, not a breath of air is stirring. A consultation is held, and it is unanimously decided that, under existing circumstances, it would be useless to attempt a stalk. They must wait for a breeze; and as it is best not to waste time, they sit down and have another snack; for, reader, a reindeer hunter's stomach is very elastic; it can take its food, or go without it, as the exigencies of the case require. Two hours pass by, and a gentle breeze springs up, but, as bad luck will have it, it blows directly from them to the deer. A move, an instant move is imperative, for a capricious puff of wind may any moment inform the keen-scented animals that danger is lurking in the vicinity.

Quickly, therefore, do they leave their resting-place, springing lightly but cautiously over the loose stones, with that ease and sure-footedness which a genuine mountaineer alone acquires. After proceeding in this way for some distance, another peep is taken over a ridge. But the deer

have shifted their position; still as far off as ever, and what is worse, on a flat platform, so that a nearer approach is impossible. Patience has once more to be called in to help. They must wait till they get behind yonder rocky ledge, towards which they are happily grazing. At last one, then another, and finally the whole herd are hidden from view. It is a critical time—they must wait a little yet—for the hunters know well that one or other of the wary does will retrace her steps, in order to have a good look round. But when she has come out, and has once more rejoined her companions, they set off at top speed, springing as lightly and noiselessly over the ground as cats, instinctively knowing which stone will afford a firm foothold, and which will not. At last the ledge is reached behind which the deer had vanished. One of the hunters worms his way up to the ridge, and peeps over. The minutes seem hours to his expectant comrade, who anxiously directs his gaze up to his friend. Presently the look-out man, without moving his head, beckons with his hand, and the two are quickly side by side on the top. Utterly unconcerned, and unconscious of danger, the deer are quietly grazing at about two hundred yards distant—a distance not too great, perhaps, for a good London-made rifle, but too far for the production of a Norwegian blacksmith to carry.

By crawling *ventre à terre* along the ridge, however, the distance may be diminished at least one half; and thus, now pushing their rifles in front, now trailing them behind, a spot is reached from which active operations may be commenced. The deer are not more than eighty yards distant: all seem unconcerned, save one of the does, who every now and then throws her head up and sniffs in the air, as if she detected treason lurking in the breeze. But she cannot impart her alarm to her lord and master, no, not though she even goes up to him and gives him a dig in the ribs. His majesty is enjoying himself, and will not be disturbed; besides, if a man were always to listen to the whims and caprices of a suspicious wife, he would never enjoy a moment's happiness.

While this scene has been enacted, our hunters have looked to their rifles; seen that the powder is well up in the nipple, and have put on fresh caps. Then, for the first time that day, a muzzle is pointed towards a deer. The older of the two hunters is to fire at the buck, while the largest doe is to be the aim of his companion. Simultaneously their rifles are discharged; one report only is heard: the buck falls dead on the spot; while the doe, after running a few hundred paces, falls on her knees never to rise again. The rest of the herd, dismayed, not knowing where to flee, and thoroughly demoralised, scamper back every minute to their prostrate lord. Meanwhile, the hunters have reloaded their trusty rifles, and one more doe bites the dust. The rest of the herd rush off, stopping, however, every now and then to take a last fond look at that favoured haunt, where never before had their privacy been intruded on.

Thus ends the day's sport; and a splendid one it has been; for it often happens that days and days may pass by without a single head being bagged.

Quickly and skilfully the deer are flayed and quartered; and after cutting off a juicy steak or two for supper that night, the rest of the venison is buried in a hole; large stones are piled on it,

to prevent the gluttons finding it out, and our hunters make the best of their way home. But it often happens that the chase has led them too far away to render a journey home that night desirable. Often and often, therefore, they have to bivouac out in the open, under the sheltering lee of some friendly rock. But they are used to such contingencies, and 'weariness can snore upon the flint.'

Such is the life of the reindeer hunter, year after year. Doubtless, it is a severe one; but, on the other hand, he likes it; and there can be no question that it sharpens the faculties, and develops the powers of endurance to an inconceivable degree. Indeed, a harder race than the reindeer hunters of Norway cannot well be imagined. The intimate acquaintance they have with the ground is marvellous. Every beck, every knoll, ay, almost every rock, is familiar to them—a knowledge that not only stands them in good stead when 'on stalk,' but is of inexpressible service should darkness or a snow-storm come suddenly on.

Alas! that this good old race should be fast disappearing before the advancing march of civilisation, which is making itself felt amid even Norwegian wilds in the shape of Cockney hunters from Christiania, and sportsmen from our own isles, armed with breechloaders, and accompanied with stores of luxuries! No wonder if the reindeer, though certainly more of them do not fall victims to the bullet than of yore, retreat into the inaccessible solitudes of the high felds, where they are safe from the hunters' hands.

LA TRAPPE.

A DEGREE of mysterious interest has always attached itself to the religious order of La Trappe, the most extreme type of the monastic idea. The vows of poverty, obedience, and seclusion were in other religious orders always more or less relaxed, and these means to their object, the intimate union of man with the understood will of God, were in general subjected to the convenience, caprice, or vices of the age and community. The vagabond, the helpless, the poor, the conscience-struck, and the fervid pietist found their various requirements supplied by the assumption of the cowl in the majority of monasteries and convents; but even religious enthusiasm might well shrink before the gloom and austerity of La Trappe.

This order was in itself a revival. Its author, the Abbé de Rancé, born of an illustrious family in France, was early remarkable for grace of manners and high intellect. Destined for the church, he was at the age of ten made canon of Notre-Dame de Paris, and on receiving the tonsure in 1635, was presented by Louis XIV. with various abbeys and benefices, amongst them that of La Trappe. For some years afterwards he led a gay if not dissipated life. A romantic story, which is said to have occasioned his sudden abandonment of gaiety, seems very doubtful; far more probable it is that being learned in the Fathers, he may have been influenced by their perusal, as was Loyola, the founder of the Jesuits, though with such different results. The warfare of the Trappist being internal—with himself alone; that of the Jesuit external, the salvation of others—to the former, knowledge of the world and its learning was prohibited; to the latter, strongly

inculcated : a curious contrast of action and means to the same end. Neither systems have been so successful as their founders anticipated; one by reason of its rigidity, the other by reason of its excesses. The Abbé de Rancé idea was to revive the discipline founded by St Bernard and St Benedict, a mode of life extremely austere, and one which was soon found to be insupportable, till in many communities the opposite extreme of licentiousness became popular. To correct such dereliction was De Rancé's object. He sold his estates, resigned his other benefices, and having assumed personal jurisdiction over his monastery of La Trappe, proceeded to carry out his views. These may be gathered from one of his numerous works, entitled *Treatise on the Sanctity, and on the Duties of the Monastic State*. In this he quotes the opinions and decisions of St Benedict, St Augustine, and others, supporting them by reasoning, chiefly remarkable for its sophistry, in some cases truly ingenious; but the work is principally interesting for its complete exposition of the theory of the monastic life. But unfortunately it was difficult, if not impossible, to carry into practice such a theory in its full perfection. St Benedict's doctrine, that the abbot holds the place of Jesus Christ—that his commands were accordingly to be regarded as divine—that monks having renounced all claim to their own persons, had no longer any right over their own powers, thoughts, and wills: these doctrines could be only asserted, be at the utmost believed in. Further, that under plea of strengthening the soul by mortifying the body, life was to be rendered a slow martyrdom, by a constant succession of fasting and penances, so severe as to affect the powers of nature, and absolutely hasten the approach of death, forms such a terrible proposition, that De Rancé for a moment hesitates, 'condemns indiscreet austerities as being productive of much evil when they are excessive,' but adds, 'St Basil never condemned a life which, though it leaves the body sufficient strength to fulfil the rules and duties of its state, nevertheless prescribes austerities and penitential exercises sufficient to produce injurious consequences as to the health of the body, enervate its strength, relax its principles, and in fine totally undermine it quickly or slowly.'

To render the body, which in its humours was generally considered as an impediment to sanctification, absolutely a means of accelerating that blessed result, was surely to be regarded as a great triumph, yet the abbot was content with writing it down, and in practice adopted a mode of procedure very different. In drawing up a set of rules and regulations for his community, De Rancé would appear to have sought the mean by which the body was to be sufficiently held in check and mortified without its mortal powers being affected. In result, the members of the community were noted for longevity, De Rancé himself dying at the age of seventy-five, 'after forty years of the most prodigious penance,' says the Duke de St Simon. In truth, the code of La Trappe was admirably adapted to the maintenance of a healthy temperate mode of life. If a strictly vegetable diet, the total absence of luxuries, including physicians, the inuring of the body to extremes of heat and cold, three hours' daily labour in gardening or household duties, and the devotion of the remainder of the twenty-four hours to prayer, meditation, and sleep—if these were to be regarded as mortifications

of the body, all the monks down to the cook were doubtless worthy. So far the picture is favourable, but it is not complete. De Rancé laid little stress upon mere corporal penance, but exerted a most rigorous and searching system of self-humiliation as weapon against pride, vanity, and other faults. The utter mortification of the spirit, or its perfect vivification, as De Rancé would rather have termed it, was the object of attainment, and the means he used for this purpose have doubtless originated the ideas of gloom and austerity which are associated with the name of La Trappe.

Situated in the valley of Seez, Normandy, remote from any habitation or highway, and surrounded by a large forest, the abbey has been described by visitors as gloomy, sad, and forbidding even in its neighbourhood. Difficult of access, it lay solitary, closed in on every side by the unbroken wall of dense forest; and in silence, broken only by the murmuring of the trees, and of a brook—the only expanse for the eyes lay upward. Those who here assumed the vows might never leave it. The appeal of friends, even for an interview, was inexorably refused, by reason of a 'holy cruelty,' which, directing all thoughts to the contemplation of the future, guarded the present by crushing all memories and affections. Six services were performed in the chapel daily, at which even the sick were obliged to attend. The intervals between services, whether spent at work in the garden, at meals, in the refectory, or otherwise, were supposed to be those of meditation. Sleep being restricted to the shortest necessary space of time, was accordingly, by strict rules, maintained undisturbed by noise or interruption. The conventual dress was simple, and by no means calculated to guard against the severity of winter. Fire was allowed only in the refectory, and then under regulations so repressive, it is astonishing that it survived the lighting. Meals were eaten in the strictest silence; if any brother was so clumsy, or unfortunate, as to let fall a knife, or break anything, he rose immediately, and prostrated himself in the centre of the room, remaining there till permitted by the superior to resume his seat. The rules are minute as to the manner of eating and drinking, and in many other particulars suggest the idea that De Rancé, as a man of refinement and good-breeding, endeavoured to enforce such habits upon the ruder members of his flock. Extreme cleanliness was exacted in everything—the use of spittoons in the chapel and elsewhere being strongly inculcated. The diet was simple, and had little variety: milk, roots, and herbs, no fish or eggs—though the latter were allowed to the sick; but De Rancé has proved at great length, in one of his books, that fish is flesh, and accordingly not to be eaten. Although, to a solitary, as they were well termed, no prospect should be more familiar than death, yet he was bound to tell his superior of illness, when, although no physician might attend the patient, the superior might himself select and administer such medicines as he thought necessary. The rules forbade the sufferer to feel or exhibit any anxiety as to the effect of such remedies, or betray the slightest curiosity as to the gravity or progress of his malady. When dying, he was laid on a bed of ashes, or, if possible, in his grave, and there partook of the final sacrament. His brethren being assembled round, he was now with his last breath permitted to speak, to address them solemnly in terms of exhortation